A

SERMON,

PREACHED

AT THE

FUNERAL

OF

Mrs. Hanah Butler,

Wife of Mr. *RICHARD BUTLER*, in *Southwark*.

July the 29*th*, MDCLXXV.

By Mr. *P. Lamb*, Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Γρηγορεῖτε οὖν ὅτι οὐκ οἴδατε ποίᾳ ὥρᾳ ὁ Κύριος ὑμῶν ἔρχεται.

MAT. 24. 42.

Watch therefore for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

LONDON, Printed for *Tho. Taylor* at the *Hand* and *Bible* on *London-Bridge*. 1675.

TO THE

READER.

Chriſtian Reader,

I Had the happy Advantage (bleſſed be God) of hearing this following Diſcourſe, and being warmed by that Word which came with ſo much Convincing, Enlightening Quickning, and Comforting Power upon my own heart, and perceiving that many others that enjoyed the ſame opportunity were greatly affected alſo, and being moved by the Importunity of ſome pious perſons that deſired to read over what they then heard (eſpecially the Husband of the Deceaſed) I adventur'd (having gotten with ſome difficulty a Copy from the Authors hands) to expoſe it to publick view, intending nothing elſe

To the Reader.

(the Lord knows) but to ſatisfie my own Spirit, to gratifie thoſe Chriſtian Friends, and to do good to many Souls, which I now commit to God, and commend to thee (whether young or old) And do heartily Pray that it may be as uſeful to thee in the Reading, as it was in the Hearing to

(Chriſtian Reader)

Thy Souls well-wiſhing

FRIEND

T. W.

A Sermon,

A

Sermon, &c.

PSALM 31. 15.

My Times are in Thy Hand.

THis Pſalm is a Pſalm of Prayers; Prayſes, and high Profeſſions, of a conſtant Affiance in, or Dependance upon the Lord, compos'd by *David*, and committed by him to his Præfect of Muſick, or the Chief Muſitian.

You know (I preſume) upon what account we are met here this day; Only I muſt inform you, that I was deſired to ſpeak to this very Portion of Scripture, which ſeems well to ſuit the occaſion.

If ye conſult the Context, and take in a little part of the 14th verſe, you will have the full ſenſe of the words: *I ſaid, Thou art my God, My Times are in thy hand.*

With this Text upon her heart, did our Deceaſed Friend go off the Stage, when ſhe went to exchange her Time for Eternity: And with this Text her ſurviving Husband waits his approaching Change; and tells us, he is following hard after, breathing out the ſame expreſſions,

I ſaid,

I ſaid, Thou art my God, My Times (alſo) *are in thy hand.*

In the words we ſhall obſerve Three Parts.

Firſt, *Davids, or the true Believers Covenant Relation to God, My God, the Foundation of all good, the Spring of Sweetneſs and Delights,* Thou art my God.

Secondly, *His Confident Profeſſion, wherein is the certainty, as well as the Sweetneſs of that Intereſt and Propriety,* I ſaid, Thou art my God.

Thirdly, *His cheerful Subm ſſion, Acquieſcence, and ſelf Reſignation,* My Times are in Thy Hand.

I muſt not ſpeak to the two firſt parts, being confined only to the Third part, The words I firſt read to you,

My Times are in Thy Hand.

I ſhall make a little ſtay to explain the terms firſt, what is meant by *My Times.*

Secondly, How that is to be underſtood, *In thy Hand.*

1. What is meant by *My Times.* Some render it οἱ κλῆροί μου, and ſo the *Latines* Tranſlate the *Septuagint, Sortes meæ,* my Lots, my Portions, all my Changes are ordered by thy Providence. There may be a litteral miſtake in the Tranſlaters, to read κλῆροί for καιροί but he that believes that his Lot, as well as his Time is in the hands of the Lord cannot be miſtaken. Take it in this ſenſe, and then it is as if the Pſalmiſt had ſaid, *Thou ſetteſt the Bounds of my Habitation, Thou haſt choſen mine Inheritance for me, All my Affairs are ordered by thee, All things that have or ſhall befall me come from thee.*

Secondly, We ſhall take it as it is rendered here in our own Tranſlation καιροί μου *Tempora mea,* My Times, my Seaſons, my Opportunities, my Good Times, my Bad Times, my Time of Infancy, my Youth, my Riper Years, and Elder Dayes, the whole time of my Life and Death alſo are in thy hand.

Second-

Secondly, How that is to be underſtood *In thy Hand*: They are not *Mei Juris*, in my own Power, but they are thine, and under thy Power.

Which appears in theſe two Particulars.

First, They are at his Appointment, *He that made the Day and the Night, and meaſured out Time, hath appointed unto me all the Times that I have ſeen.* In *Eccleſiaſtes* 1. it is ſaid, *To every thing there is a Seaſon, and a time to every Purpoſe under the Heavens.* Whether it be a Caſting Down or a Lifting Up, it is he that doeth it. In *Pſal.* 102. 10. *Thou (O God) liſteſt me up, and caſteſt me down*; which was the ground of that high flying Confidence of his in *Pſal.* 71. 20. *Thou which haſt ſhewed me great and ſore Troubles, ſhalt quicken me again, and bring me up again from the depths of the Earth.* Thou haſt meaſured and appointed unto me all my times; Times of Health, and Times of Sickneſs; Times of Plenty, and Times of Poverty; Times of Peace, and Times of Trouble; a Time of Life, and a Time of Death. In *Job* 7. 1. *Is there not an appointed time unto Man upon Earth? are not his dayes as the dayes of an Hireling?*

Secondly, Our Times are in his Power, being all at his Diſpoſe, how long they ſhall laſt; He that ſets bounds to the Rowling Ocean, with an *Hitherto ſhalt thou go and no farther*, hath ſet immoveable Points and Periods to all our Times and Seaſons, and they ſhall not continue one Moment longer, whether they be our *Dies Albi* or *Atri*, our Black or White Dayes; our times of Health or Sickneſs; of Plenty, or Poverty; Peace, or Trouble; yea Life it ſelf hath its certain uncertain Bounds certainly known to God, unknown to us. He knows the number of our dayes, and therefore *David* did wiſely to enquire at the Mouth of God con-

concerning the number of his dayes: No man can live longer, or dye ſooner than the Lord hath determined, and upon this *David* here doth compoſe and ſettle his Spirit in the Abſolute Soveraignty, Infinite Wiſdome, Boundleſs Mercy, and undoubted Faithfulneſs of the Lord his God. Thou art God and my God, Thou knoweſt what is beſt for me, and when it is fitteſt for me to enjoy good, when it is moſt fit to deliver me from the troubles of my Life, or from my Life of Troubles:

My Times are in Thy Hand.

The Obſervation that will be offered you from theſe words is,

Obſer. *It is a matter of great Concernment, and high Advantage for the Sons of Men to know that their Times are in the Hand of God.*

To know this Truly, to know it Experimentally, to know it Effectually, is undoubtedly a matter of great Advantage to the Saints of God.

The two things I ſhall do before I come to the more practical Improvement of this ſeaſonable Truth.

Firſt, I ſhall ſhew that all our Times are in the Hand of God.

Secondly, Why it is a matter of ſo great Concernment and high Advantage for the Saints and People of God, to know Truly and Effectually, That their Times are in the Hand of God.

Firſt, *That all our Times are in the Hand of God.*

Firſt, Our Times or Seaſons of Grace are in his hands, How long Grace ſhall be tendered, How long we ſhall enjoy the Day of the Son of Man, How long the Goſpel ſhall be Preached to us, and his Spirit ſtrive with us, for he hath ſaid, His Spirit ſhall not always ſtrive with Man,

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He gives unto all their Times and Seaſons, as in *Rev.* 2. 21. of *Jezabel* it is ſaid *I gave her ſpace to repent of her Fornication, but ſhe repented not*, which is clear in that of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to *Jeruſalem* in *Luke* 19. 42. *If thou hadſt known, even thou, at leaſt in this thy day the things that belong to thy Peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.* She had her day, but a *now* that was not hers: And in the Diſpenſation of Grace there are (I am apt to believe) certain ſet times, and ſecret periods of Grace which the Lord hath appointed, and it is the higheſt part of Wiſdome to obſerve them, which if a man neglect, he is undone for ever: the Lord knows how long Grace ſhall be offered to every ſoul, he hath ſet bounds to his own waiting to be gracious, and knows with what number of Convictions he will deal with every ſinner: in *Luke* 19. 9. *This day* (ſaies the Lord to *Zacheus*) *is ſalvation come to thine houſe*, Make haſte and come down: If *Zacheus* had not entertained the Salvation of that day, *Zacheus* might never have had Salvation. There is much in that 2 *Cor.* 6. 2. *Now is the accepted time, now is the day of Salvation.*

Secondly, Our times of Peace and Proſperity are in the hand of the Lord; or elſe our days of Comfort and Liberty would be ſhort: Jeſus Chriſt had but a little Quiet in the World, but that little that he had was in his Fathers hand, or elſe he had had none at all. In *John* 7. 30. It is ſaid there that *they ſought to take him, but no man laid hands on him becauſe his hour was not come.* The Church hath but a little Sun-ſhine: once we hear, *Then had the Churches Reſt*; but that little is in his hand, who is Lord of time, Therefore She complains to him in *Iſa.* 63. 18. *The People of thine Holineſs have poſſeſſed it but a little while*: That Land of Promiſe, but a little while in reſpect of what they deſired,

or of what they expected. None can make our good days more or leſs, but he, as in *Job* 34. 29. *When he giveth Quietneſs, who then can make Trouble?*

Thirdly, Our Times of Trouble and Adverſity are in the Hand of the Lord, he hath determined how long our evil dayes, our times of Sorrow and Affliction ſhall laſt; therefore they are ſaid to be ſometime for a day, a night of heavineſs, an hour, a few moments; Evils ſhall not come ſooner, nor ſtay longer than he pleaſe on the Tabernacles of his Saints: The Rod of the Wicked muſt not reſt alway on the Lot of the Righteous. In *Pſal.* 102. 13. it is obſervable, That the Time to favour *Sion*, yea the Set-time was come. He appointed how long *Iſrael* ſhould be in the Iron Furnace, and how long they ſhould be in *Babylons* Captivity: He knows how long the Church ſhall be in the Wilderneſs: He hath counted the Number of the Beaſt in *Rev.* 13. 18. as he once Number'd *Belſhazzars* Kingdome in *Dan.* 5. 26. *Thy Kingdome is Number'd*, &c.

Fourthly, The whole time of our lives is in his Hands: He numbers our dayes, and in his appointed time takes away our Breath, and then we dye, whether youug or old, as in *Job* 21. 24. One dies in his full ſtrength, and when his breaſts are full, *&c.* and another dies in bitterneſs of his Soul, *&c.* It is not this Sickneſs, this Infirmity, or that Age that takes away our Time; but God, who is Lord of our Time; for Perſons of the ſame Age in which one dyes, have lived much longer, and many have eſcap'd with their Lives through thoſe Diſeaſes and Infirmities under which ſome Expired.

I come now to the Reaſons why it is a Matter of ſuch great Concernment, and high Advantage for the Sons of Men, truly and effectually to know that their times are in the Hands of the Lord.

And they are theſe Three.

Reaſ. 1. *Becauſe ſuch a True and Effectual Knowledge of this, doth much conduce to the preſent Comfort and Security of our Lives.* As appears in theſe two Conſiderations.

Firſt, Conſider if our Times are in the Hand of God; then they be not in the hands of any other but by his permiſſion: Our Times are not in the hands of Men or Devils; and it is well for us that our Times are not in the hands of wicked and ungodly Perſons, nor in the hands of Satan; yea, that they are not in our own hands. If our times were in the hands of the wicked of the world, we ſhould have a time like *Iſraels* in *Ægypt*, *Exod.* 1. 14, whoſe lives were bitter with cruel Bondage. If our Times were in the hand of the Divil, we ſhould hardly ſee a good day; the Sun ſhould never ſhine upon our Tabernacle, or elſe he would quickly rowl our time into a dreadful Eternity; You may obſerve how he uſed his Power, when the Lord gave him leave againſt *Job*, how ſoon he ran to the utmoſt Link of his permiſſive Chain, and when he had got a little power of their time, the next news that we hear, is that doleful Cry in *Job* 1. 19. *And all the young men are dead.*

Secondly, If we know that our Times be in the Hand of God, what Comfort and Security is here? That he is your God, a God of Infinite Power, Wiſdome, and Faithfulneſs that orders all your Matters; and can any thing be better done than what Infinite Wiſdome Orders? He Orders all for your good, and that in due ſeaſon, 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. though now for a ſeaſon if need be you are in heavineſs, and nothing ſhall be to your hurt, your Proſperity ſhall not continue ſo long upon you to be a ſnare to you, and your Adverſity ſhall not lie ſo long upon you, as to ſink you. The thoughts of his Sovereignty, that he is God, is

ground enough for a quiet ſubmiſſion: But his Covenant Relation, *He is my God*, is the ground of full Comfort, and Satisfaction: In *Eccleſ.* 7. 14. It is ſaid, *In the day of Proſperity be joyful, but in the day of Adverſity conſider, God alſo hath ſet the one over againſt the other to the end that man ſhould find nothing after him*: So much trouble and ſo much peace as he ſees fit, that none may have cauſe to complain, or to think that it could have been better done: 1 *Cor.* 10. 13. He laies his Burthen no more, nor longer upon us than we are able to bear: He that meaſures out times of trouble, proportions ſtrength, as in *Deut* 33. 25. *As thy day is, ſo ſhall thy ſtrength be.*

The Second Reaſon is, *Becauſe ſuch a true and effectual Knowledge of this, that our times are in the hand of the Lord, doth tend much to the Quickning of our Care, and Spiritual Activity, under all times.*

1. If we once come to know effectually, that we have our Goſpel times and Seaſons of Grace from the Lord, and that they are in his hands, How ſhould we prize them? How can we know that our times of Grace be in the hands God, and not think it high time to get Grace into our Hearts?

2. Who doth ſeriouſly conſider that his Mercies come from God, and that they be all in his hands, and he can ſnatch them away when he will, and not make uſe of thoſe fair ſeaſons for God, and his own ſoul? Leaſt his Health be turned into Sickneſs, his Peace into Trouble in a Moment?

3. Who knows that Afflictions are from the hand of the Lord, and conſiders the end of the Lord in afflicting his People, and will not exerciſe his Faith, his Love, his Hope, his Patieuce? O when we know our times of Affliction are in his Hands, how ſhould we attend the work of an Afflicted State, leſt the Rod lie alway upon us, or be re-

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moved from us before the Reformation be wrought in us, becauſe Afflictions are ſaid in *Heb.* 12. 11. to bring forth *the peaceable fruits of Righteouſneſs to them* (and to them only) *that are exerciſed thereby.*

4. Who is he that knows truly and effectually that his Time of Life is in the Hand of God, that can ſin away his Life? Oh how ſhould we work while the day laſts, leſt the night come; How ſhould we be trimming our Lamps? And becauſe our Times are at Heavens diſpoſe, how ſhould we ſtand with our Loins girt, and Lights burning, accounting that all the time that we have, is but the Bridegrooms lingering, that the Bride may make her ſelf ready, *Luke* 12. 35, 36.

The third Reaſon is, *Becauſe ſuch a true and effectual Knowledge of this, that our Times are in the Hands of God, hath a fair tendency to the ſupport of our Faith, and to encourage our Recumbancy.*

This will make us depend upon God for every day, and every night, who is Lord of Time; This will make us Truſt in the Lord for the Continuance of Good Times, and the removing of Evil Times, to exerciſe every Grace indeed, which *Job* calls a waiting upon God in *Job* 14. 14. when he knew that his Times were with God, he reſolves, *All the days of his Appointed time, he would wait till his Change came.*

The *Application* follows.

The firſt Uſe is by way of Information, and ſhews us, the undoubted Sovereignty of God; that all Times, Seaſons, Occurrences, Changes, and Viciſſitudes are from him: The Heathens aſcribed ſo much to their *Jupiter*, that he had power of good and evil Times, by the two Veſſels, one filled with good, the other with evil, at the Enter-

Enterance of his Temple. And ſhall not we much more aſcribe it unto God, who doeth whatſoever pleaſeth him, with Perſons, Families, Kingdoms, and Nations; which made *Daniel* break forth in a kind of Extaſie, in *Dan.* 2. 20, 21. *Bleſſed be the Name of God for ever and ever, for Wiſdome and Might are his. He changes the Times and the Seaſons, He removeth Kings, and ſets up Kings.*

Secondly, By way of Information: If our Times be in the Hands of God, O how much cauſe have we all to admire the wonderful goodneſs of God, that he hath not put a period to our dayes, and that any of us are on this ſide the grave. It is He that holdeth our Souls in Life, as in *Job* 10. 12. *Thou haſt granted me Life and Favour, and with thy Viſitation haſt preſerved my Spirit.* We had ſinned away our time long agoe, and our Souls into Hell, if our Times had not been in his Hands. We had wiſhed away our dayes many years ſince, if He had not been Wiſer than we. How oft have we wiſhed that ſuch a week were over, that ſo many Months were paſt, and ſuch a year were come, and had nothing left us by this time, but ſad Repentings for our Folly, and everlaſting Wiſhes that we had been more Wiſe.

The Enemy had invaded our days, put out our Light, and plucked Time out of our hands, had not the Lord aſſerted his own Prerogative.

But in a ſpecial manner we have cauſe to eye this Wonderful Love and Goodneſs, that our times of Grace, and Goſpel Light, and means are continued to us. How many Attempts have there been made againſt this glorious day? How oft have the Malicious and Envious Papal Crew breathed out Threatnings to put an end to our Spiritual Enjoyments; and their Curſed Breath, and Violent Blaſts had blowen

blown out our Light, but that he that holdeth the Stars in his Right hand, hath not yet ſuffered the Sun to ſet upon his Prophets, nor our Sun to go down at noon: In this we have ſtill cauſe to rejoyce, *That our Times are in thy hand, O God.*

The Second Uſe is a word of Terrour, and Rebuke, to all the wicked and Ungodly, their Times are in the hands of God, though they live as if they ſhould live here for ever, and as if they were Lords of Time.

Firſt, Here is a Rebuke and Terrour to them in all their Carnal and Earthly Projects, whatever they deſign without God; in all which they be but like the Fool in the Goſpel, that thought he had much Goods laid up for many years, when he had not a day to live: How many be there that boaſt themſelves of *To-morrow*? when as *Solomon* tells them in *Prov.* 27. 1. they know not what is in the Womb of a Day, or what a Day may bring forth. O! How many great Thoughts, aſpiring Thoughts, and high Deſigns have been conſum'd in the Forge of Time? How many Envious, how many Greedy and Covetous Projects, have withered for want of Time? as it is obſerved in *Job* 21. 17. *How oft is the Candle of the wicked put out, how oft cometh their Deſtruction?*

2. Here's Terrour and Rebuke to them in all their Cruel and Bloody Devices, againſt the Church and People of God, when they think to change Times and Seaſons; as if they were as immortal as their Rage? He that is Lord of Time, will quickly bring them to ſee, that God alone is the living God, and they be but men: Witneſs that Furious Act of *Pharoah*, He would Purſue, he would Overtake, he would Deſtroy; and how ſoon was he Overtaken and Deſtroyed? *Haman*, He would cut off the whole Seed of the

Jews,

Jews, and was cut off in his work: concerning that bloody *Doeg*, ſayes *David*, Pſal. 52. 1. *why boaſteſt thou thy ſelf in Miſchief*, &c. in *verſe* 4. *God will deſtroy thee for ever*: and in *Pſal.* 55. 23. *Bloody and Deceitful men ſhall not live out half their dayes*: half the number of the days of Man, or half the days that they would live. When Wicked men ſhall daringly affront the Sovereignty of God, as if times were in their hands, in his Severity he will make them to know, that Their Times are in His hands, and ſuddenly comes to them, and tells them, they muſt dye and not live. God doeth not lend you time to do the work of Sin, to gratifie your Luſts, to promote the Kingdoms of the Devil, and to diſhonour God.

O! Conſider this, as the Pſalmiſt doeth Councel, in *Pſalm* 50. at the latter end *you that forget God* (that forget that he gave you time, and can put an end to your lives) *leſt I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver*: when for this horrid abuſe of time you ſhall lie all Eternity long, under his inevitable Wrath and Fury.

The Third Uſe is by way of Dehortation: If our Times be in the Hands of God, do not, O do not make too bold with Time, leaſt you make too bold with God; Remember you are not Maſters of your Time, but Stewards of a moſt precious Talent, which if it be abuſed, will dwindle away, and turn into Eternal Torment.

David indeed calls it *My Time*, but ſoon reminds himſelf, in whoſe Power it is; *Mine* for *Uſe*, but *Thine* as to its *Diſpoſe*; *Mine* as *Lent*, but *Thine* as *Lord*. O be not then Prodigals of your Time. O do not Sight nor Sleep away your dear-bought Times and Seaſons of Grace. Do not Wanton away your Summer Seaſon of Mercies, and Sunſhine of Proſperity: Be not ſtupid, dead, and hardened

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in a day of Affliction, that your Afflictions do not leave you worſe than they found you; and theſe times of Tryal, and Burning times, make you only more fit for the Eternal Burning. All theſe Times I ſhould inſiſt upon, but then I ſhould be detained from ſpeaking to that which I am more particularly called to: That you would not proſtitute the Time of your Lives, to the Will of the Fleſh, to that old Bawd the World, or to that grand Impoſter the Devil, who by ſtealing away your Time, will rob you of your Glorious Eternity.

Firſt, Then do not Sacrifice your Time to the World, to that Idol, that Mamon. It is ſad to ſee how fooliſh man beſtows all his precious time upon a poor periſhing World, and ſuffers a willing Cheat, till both run out together, and leave nothing behind them, but Vanity and Vexation. This is a very great Sin and Folly: Wherefore when you have the World in your Eye, remember, that your time is in Gods Hand: That his having the Rains of Time in his hand, may Check, and Curb your hot-mettled Affections, that they may be more moderate, and not with ſuch a conſtant unwearyed pace, and with ſo much ſpeed purſue ſuch a poor thing as this World is: and could you but ſtand upon the utmoſt borders of Time, and look back upon it, you would more wonder at your own folly, than ever you did before admire its Beauty. Never did any dying Saint repent, that he had ſo little of the World; but thouſands have complained of too much of this, when they come to the Subarbs of another World. The Apoſtle *James*, ſharply reproves this piece of politick Madneſs, in *James* 4. 13, 14. *Goe to now, ye that ſay to day, or to morrow, we will goe into ſuch a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and ſell, and get Gain; whereas you know not what ſhall be*

on the morrow; for what is your Life? it is even a Vapour that appears for a little time, then vaniſheth away. The Time of our Life is like a Torch, or a Candle, with which, while we are ſeeking this World, a ſudden Damp from the Earth, or Blaſt from Heaven, blows upon it, and it goes out in our hands; and then, O fearful Diſappointment!

Secondly, Let not Sin have ſo much as the leaſt Moment allowed to her Service: He that appointed a Time, and a Seaſon for every purpoſe, never allowed one minute to Sin: Oh! doth God give Time to us by meaſure; and ſhall we give it away to Sin without meaſure! Let the time paſt of your Lives ſuffice, in which you have ſerv'd Sin, and gratified your Luſts: When in your ignorance you did not know the Violence of Sin, and the Worth of Time. Now as the Apoſtle ſayes, in *Eph.* 5. 15. *See that you walk Circumſpectly, not as Fools, but as Wiſe, Redeeming the Time.* This is your Wiſdome, to Redeem your loſt Time: and all that, is loſt time, that is not laid out for God. Shall God give us Time, by Dayes, and Weeks, and Months, and Years; and ſhall we laviſh out our Time, upon our Luſts, in many Dayes, many Weeks, many Moneths, and whole Luſtres of Years? Oh! what a bold and daring Sin is that? When God never promiſed Man a *To-morrow*; we ſhall promiſe Sin a *To-morrow*, and *next Day*, and *next Year*? It was as fooliſhly, as reſolutely ſaid of them, in *Iſa.* 56. 12. *Come ye, ſay they, I will fetch Wine, and we will fill our ſelves with Strong-drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day, and much more abundant.*

The next is a Uſe of Exhortation. *Is our Time in the Hand of God? O then let us improve it for God, as thoſe that muſt give an Account ſhortly to him, for our Sabbaths,*

our

our Seaſons of Grace, and the whole time of our Lives: If our Time be not imployed in his Work, while it is in our hand, our Eternity (we may well fear) will be in the hands of the Devil.

This Exhortation will branch forth it ſelf to ſeveral ſorts.

Firſt, To thoſe that are yet Young, and have lived but a little time in the VVorld.

Secondly, To the Aged, who have had many days and years.

Thirdly, To all ſorts of Perſons, both Young and Old.

Firſt, This Exhortation comes directed to you that are yet tender and young; and O that you would receive a word of Councel from me this day: It is for your Souls, it is from Chriſt, and it is to make you happy: And it ſhall be in a few Particulars, that you may the more willingly receive them.

The firſt is, If your Times be in Gods hand, then do not offer up the Firſt Fruits of your Lives to the Devil, it is Gods due: Shall the Devil, and Sin have the Flower, and Marrow, and the Strength; and will God be put off with the wither'd Stump, the dry Bones, and Rottenneſs, and Infirmity? The Apoſtle *Paul* gives you this Exhortation, in that to *Timothy*, 2 Tim. 2. 22. *Flee Youthful Luſts, but follow Righteouſneſs, Faith, &c.* Let not Sin take ſo early a Throne in your hearts: it will coſt you dear to fall in with any Luſt: when you ſee how ſome young people, give up themſelves to the Vanities and Debaucheries of the times, pity them, and look to your ſelves. I remember what *Solomon* ſayes, in *Eccleſ.* 7. 17. *Be thou not overmuch wicked, neither be thou Fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou dye before thy Time?*

Solomon doth not here allow of any degree of Sin, but rather pities poor man, that in his leaſt ſinning, he ſins too much: or thoſe ſins of Infirmity which attend us is enough, but if we ſin willingly, we ſin over-much indeed.

For why ſhould'ſt thou die before thy time?

Object. *It ſeems man may die before his Time.*

Anſw. I conceive that *Solomon* intimates here a very great Truth; That Sin is the great Enemy of our Lives, and Cut-throat of Time; that which brought Death into the VVorld, that which hath been ever ſince devouring the time of our Lives; before there was ſo much ſin in the VVorld, men did live more years.

2. That though a man may die before his Time, yet he cannot die before God's Time.

A man may die before his own time in ſeveral reſpects;

1. Before he is fit to die, before he be renewed, ſanctified, furniſhed with Grace, either habitually, or actually prepared for death.

2. A man may die before his Time, that is, before he is willing to die.

3. Before Nature hath run its Courſe: And leſt this daring Youth ſhould run on ſtill, ſayes the VViſeman, *Eccleſ.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce, O Young-man in thy Youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the dayes of thy youth, and walk in the wayes of thy heart, and in the ſight of thine eyes, but know thou, that for all theſe things, God will bring thee into Judgment.*

2. Chuſe God for your Portion, Heaven for your Inheritance, and Chriſt for your Guide: O! let him be the Guide of your Youth; account nothing worthy of your time, but the things of Heaven; and like the Manna Gatherers,

Gatherers, go forth early before the Sun be up, before the heat of youthful Luſts carry you a Luſting after Quails. Oh how much time may you then live in a few days! For ſo long doth a man live truly, as he lives to God. Oh! that you were all as ſo many young *Timothy's*, of whom the Apoſtle *Paul* with abundance of joy ſpeaks in 2 *Tim.* 3. 15. that *from a Child he had learned the holy Scriptures, which were able to make him wiſe to Salvation.* I am come with rowling Bowels, to beſeech you in the name of Chriſt, to apply your hearts to VViſdome, that you may pluck your Souls from the Snares of Satan, and be filled with the knowledge of Chriſt. As you have many Enemies, ſo you have many Friends, Preaching to you, Praying for you, and preſcribing excellent Rules and Inſtructions: Priſe and peruſe their VVorks more: Furniſh your Souls, whiles you have time, with thoſe wholſome Principles of Religion, which they have made by their Pains and Study ſo plain and eaſie before you. This is your Summer Seaſon, do as *Solomon* directs, in *Prov. 6. 6, 7, 8. Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, Conſider her wayes, and be wiſe; which having no Guide, Overſeer, or Ruler, provideth her meat in the Summer, and gathereth her food in the Harveſt; how long wilt thou ſleep, O Sluggard, when wilt thou ariſe out of thy ſleep?*

3. Do not account, that your Time is in your hands, or that you have more time to live than other Perſons, leaſt that ſeaſon become a ſnare: Say not in your hearts, I am young, and have a long day before me, ſhall I deny my ſelf the pleaſures of my Youth? No, no, I am reſolved to enjoy my ſelf: ſhall not I gather this Roſe now it is in its Prime? and pluck theſe ſweet Flowers now they offer themſelves full ripe to my hand? Shall not I rejoyce in the

the delights of this Verdant Seaſon? I ſhall have time enough to ſerve God, and mind my Salvation hereafter.

1. Conſider how ſhort, and uncertain, (O how ſhort and uncertain) is the Life of Man; and how Frail and Brittle, is this Vegete, and Sprightly Youth of thine! like as a Flower that quickly withers, ſprings up, and blows, and dies in a day: or like a goodly Bubble, that breaks with a little blaſt: In *Golgotha* are Skulls of all ſeizes, the Young and Old are there.

2. Conſider, thou canſt not tell, whether thou ſhalt have any more Calls, Councels, or Convictions; thou mayeſt live long enough to out-live thoſe things, and then it had been better for thee that thou hadſt never lived. Thou mayeſt have more Time, but can'ſt thou know, that thou ſhalt have more Means? Shall the Goſpel continue with thee? Or if it do; Thou mayeſt have more Means of Grace, but no Grace, to improve the Means. *Therefore to day, while it is called to day, harden not thy heart*, But *Remember thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth, while the evil dayes come not, nor the years draw nigh, in which thou ſhalt ſay I have no pleaſure in them*, Eccleſ. 12. 1.

4. And Laſtly, At this diſtance, take a Proſpect of Old Age, if Death come not, Age will; and when you come to a decripid OldAge, when the Eyes grow dim, the Knees tremble, and the ſtrength is gone; when nothing but a Couch, or a Bed will ſerve the turn; VVhat ſhall comfort you in this weak and Bedrid Condition, but the ſweet Fruits of a well-improv'd Time of Youth?

Divitiæ Senum non Canities Senum, ſed Juventutis induſtriæ: The Riches of Old Age is not the Silver Hairs of the Aged, but the Golden Treaſures gotten by an Induſtrious Youth.

Youth. This will be your Comfort, if you be like good *Obadiah*, in 1. *King* 18. 4. who feared the Lord from his Youth: Or *Ezekiel*, in *Ezek.* 4. 14. who did eat no unclean thing from his Youth. The vain Delights, and pleaſant Fruits of wanton Youth, will become VVormwood, Gall, and Bitterneſs in Age: But the good Seed, which is ſown whiles you are young, will yield a comfortable Crop when you are Old. You will have a great Advantage in the cloſe of your Day, if you can ſay with *David*, in *Pſal.* 71. 17, 18. *Thou haſt taught me from my Youth, Now, O God, when I am Old, and gray headed, forſake me not.* O! when the good old Man, or Woman, can plead an old Acquaintance with God, when they are about to leave all their Earthly Friends and Acquaintance, how will it refreſh their tired Spirits, more than New Wine?

Which minds me of my Promiſe to Aged perſons, in the ſecond Branch of this Exhortation.

2. Here is a ſeaſonable word of Councel to you that are Aged; your Gray-hairs Preach a dayly Lecture of Mortality; and are as God's White Flag to give you a fair Warning, and a timous Call, to make ready, and come away. Hark, how he ſpeaks to you to prepare; your Sands are almoſt run out, your Sun is ſetting: And becauſe you ſtand within view of Death, and upon the brink of the Grave, in the very Evening of your Time, I hope you will ſeriouſly attend, and hear as dying Men, what I have to ſay to you, as a dying Man, from the Living God; and I beſeech you as Fathers, and Brethren, to know and conſider your Times are in the Hand of God, and that as *David* ſaid of himſelf, in 1 *Sam.* 20. 3. There is but a ſtep between you and Death; you have had ſeveral Times and Seaſons, and have removed from Infancy to Youth; from

Youth,

Youth, to Manhood; from Manhood, to Old Age; one Remove more leaves them in the Grave. Good Old *Iſaac*, in *Gen.* 27. 2. cryes out, *Now I am Old, and know not the day of my Death*; but he conſidered he muſt ſhortly dye. Let it never be ſaid of you as it was of ſecure *Ephraim*, in *Hoſ.* 7. 9. That *Gray hairs were here, and there upon him and knew it not, he did not conſider.*

Firſt, then, Now you are Old, and can live but little longer here, take a Proſpect of Heaven; and ſeeing you are going off this Dung-hill; take off your Affections from this World; though Age make your Bodies ſtoop towards the Earth, yet let Grace make your Minds erect, and looking up towards Heaven, as having now nothing elſe to mind, but your Heavenly Inheritance. O! begin your Heaven-work, go Bleſſing, and Prayſing God to your Graves; as Old *Simeon*, *For mine Eyes have ſeen thy Salvation.* Count over the many Bleſſings, Experiences of Mercy, and Pledges of Love, wherewith God hath filled up your Long-life, and Many Dayes; your Spiritual Bleſſings, your Temporal Mercies, Deliverances, and Preſervations; and amongſt all, that the Lord, in whoſe Hands your Time is, hath lengthened out your Dayes, and brought you to a good Old Age; for Old Age is a Bleſſing, therefore you ſhould go off Bleſſing God. In *Gen.* 25. 8. It is ſaid of *Abraham*, that *he gave up the Ghoſt, and dyed in a good Old Age*: an Old Man, and full, full of Riches and Honour; and that which is better, full of Grace; as *Eliphaz*, in *Job* 5. 26, ſaid to *Job*, *Thou ſhalt come to thy Grave in a full Age; like as a Shock of Corn cometh in his Seaſon*: yet though Age be in it ſelf a Bleſſing, a good old Age is a better Bleſſing: In *Prov.* 16. 31. *The hoary head is Honourable*, but it muſt *be found in the way of Righ-*

Righteouſneſs. If Age have any honouor, Righteouſneſs is the Crown: If the Hoary Head be a Crown, Righteouſneſs is the only Jewel of that Crown: But to be an Old Sinner, an Old Swearer, an Old Drunkard, and Old Adulterer, is a fearful Blot and Stain to Honorable Old Age; yea, that which is much worſe, Sin will tumble the Old Rotten Sinner into Hell, as in *Iſa.* 65. 20. *The Sinner of an hundred years old ſhall die accurſed.*

Secondly, Now you are Old, be much upon your Heart-ſearching, and Soul-humbling Work: Now you are feeble with Age, and can hardly go to hear Sermons, attend Ordinances, your Eyes grow dimm, that you cannot Read, your Ears Deaf, that you cannot well hear; mind your In-work the more: as in Winter time when Men cannot work abroad, they do the more at home: ſo now, this is your VVinter-ſeaſon, and you cannot do much abroad, do the more at home: Look over the Black Roll, and Catalogue of your many Sins, and Iniquities, of a Long Life; the many Miſcarriages of your many dayes, that you may Repent, and apply the Blood of Chriſt, and ſo make your peace with God; thus the Saints have done, as *David* in *Pſal.* 25. 7. *Remember not the Sins of my Youth.*

Make ready your Accounts, examin all your Receipts, look over your Diſburſments, what you have done with your Time, your Parts, your Eſtates, and how you have employed all

your Talents; behold Death is at the door, to ſummon you, to appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt; and it is but a very little while, and it will be ſaid to you, *Give an account of your Steward-ſhip, for you can be no longer Stewards*: All theſe are weighty works. In a word, take out that new Leſſon which the Apoſtle gives Old Perſons eſpecially, to Learn, and do; you will find it in 2 *Tit.* 2. 3. *Let the Aged men be Sober, Grave, Temperate, Sound in the Faith, in Charity, in Patience*, &c.

Thirdly, Now you are Old, maintain your Spiritual Combate yet a little longer, do not leave the Field, as long as you have time: If you have borne the brunt, and heat of the day, lay not down your Arms, till you lay down your Lives: you have a good Captain that will never leave you; therefore ſayes the Apoſtle, *Fight the good fight of Faith, take hold of Eternal Life.*

It is reported of *Moſes*, in the laſt Chapter of *Deutronomy*, and the 7th verſe, That though he were an hundred and twenty years old, yet his Eyes waxed not dim, nor was his Natural Force abated. To allude to this, it could be wiſhed, that our Spiritual Light might not wax dim, but we may be as quick-ſighted as ever, to eſpy the Wiles of Satan, the workings of Sin, and ſtirrings of every Luſt, and that our Spiritual Courage might increaſe againſt every Corruption; that as our dayes multiply, our Corruptions may abate. That was a great piece of Policy and Subtilty adviſed

viſed by the Lords of the *Philiſtins*, That though *David* had been long in their Country, yet he muſt not go up to the Battel with them, leſt he ſhould turn his hand againſt them: So it would be our Wiſdome; though Sin hath had a long abode with us all our Life-time, yet now it is time to put it far away from us, and not ſuffer it to go with us to our Death-bed, nor lie down with us in the Grave; for in the day of Judgment it will riſe up, and turn its hand againſt us, and deſtroy us. Let me adviſe you (and herein I ſpeak to my ſelf as well as unto you) to imitate *Abraham* in this Caſe; in *Gen.* 14. He went forth to the Reſcue of *Lot*, and fought till the going down of the Sun; and when he came up from the Battel, *Melchiſedec* met him, and gave him Bread and Wine, and Bleſſed him. Our Soul is this *Lot*, we are concerned to Reſcue this Soul from the hands of all our Spiritual Enemies: We muſt not leave our Souls in the hands of them, but if we will reſolve to fight till the Sun-ſet of our Lives, we ſhall have ſucceſs, and fare as *Abraham* did, and better. Our High Prieſt, *Melchizedeck*, Jeſus Chriſt, our King of Righteouſneſs, and Prince of Peace, will meet us with Bread and Wine, and the Bleſſing, and bring us into his Fathers Joy.

Fourthly and Laſtly, Now you are Old, and have but a little time, do much Good, and furniſh your Souls with as much of the Good of another World, as poſſibly you can: whiles you have time do good to all men; do good for your own Souls.

What will all this World ſignifie in a dying hour, when nothing but Chriſt and Grace, and the things that accompany Salvation, will be of any uſe to you, or value with you: Let this be your Care now this Old Rotten Tabernacle is tottering, and cannot be Repaired, to provide for your ſelves a Building not made with hands, Eternal in the Heavens; and as the Outward Man Decayes, ſo let the inward Man be Renewed from Day to Day, Grace in Grace, and in the Knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt. It is obſerved at this time of the Year; That the Corne at Harveſt Ripens more in One day, than in a Week before: The neerer you come to your End, the more let Grace and Holineſs abound. Be you like the Trees in *Pſalm* 92. 12. that are of Gods Planting, that bring forth more Fruit in Old Age, Or like the Sun when it is neer Setting, ſhews Fairer than at any time of the Day, as if he would Recompence his ſhort ſtay with greater Light.

In furniſhing your ſelves with Knowledge, Graces, Promiſes, and Experiences, ſhew ſo much Dili-

Diligence, as thoſe that know they have but a very little time of gathering; as they that went forth for Manna on the Sabbath Eve, gathered twice as much as upon any other Day: So do you remember you are upon the Eve of your Everlaſting Sabbath, and muſt gather for Eternity: And in doing Good, let your Zeal, and Activity, be like that of *Thiatira*, of whom it was ſaid, in *Apoc.* 2. 19. *I know thy Works, and Charity, and Service, and Faith, and thy Patience, and thy Works; And the Laſt to be more than the Firſt.*

Thirdly, That every one may have his Portion; Here is an Exhortation to all Sorts of Perſons, both Young and Old; you are all Concerned. If your Times be in the Hand of God; you have but your Time and it is only known to God how long or how ſhort it is: And ſeeing by the great Statute Law of Heaven, in *Hebrews* 9. 27. *It is appointed unto all men Once to die, but after this the Judgment*; and but once to die; How ſhould we be all prepared for that Change, that immediately lets us into an immutable State! We have our Time allotted; therefore we ſhould do as *David*, *Acts* 13. 36. Serve our Generation according to the Will of God, before we fall aſleep: We know not when the Great Lord of Time will put a Period to our dayes; Therefore we ſhould Work and Watch, and Watch and Pray, as Chriſt ſayes,

ſayes, in *Mat.* 24. 42. *watch therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come. Omnem Crede Diem*, &c. Think every Day is thy laſt Day. You have no Patent, nor Leaſe of your Time. This Doctrine you have Preached and Exemplified by the Death of Friends; Young or Old!, you muſt away, when this Cold-handed Sergeant comes to Arreſt and Attach your Lives. Behold, He lies in Ambuſcado for the Young in every place; and comes *Aperto Marte*, in Open View to the Aged? and when he comes, you can no more add a Moment to your Time, than you can add one Cubit to your Stature.

Firſt, Therefore, While you have Time, know the Worth of Time. This is our Folly, that we know not the Worth of Mercies but by the Want of them: The way to know the Worth of Time, is to lay our ſelves on our Death-bed, and ſuppoſe our ſelves ſtanding upon the utmoſt Confines of Time, and now entering upon Eternity. We ſhall have other thoughts of Time when we come to dye, than now we have, and cry out, O TIME! but all the World cannot procure us one Moments ſtay.

Secondly,

Second'y, Do the Work of Time while Time lasts. The Day is Short, and the Work is Great: And what is the Work of Time? It is to provide for Eternity: and thus we provide for Eternity; By getting an Interest in Christ, by making our Calling and Election sure, by Fighting the good Fight of Faith, Running with Patience the Race that is set before us, doing the Works of God, and being fill'd with the Fruits of Righteousness.

Thirdly, Make haste about your Spiritual Work, The Work is Yours, but the Time is not Yours, Work while the Day lasts, be not slothful in Business, but fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord: The Time is coming when the Lights will be put out, the Windows shut, the Curtains drawn, and all the working Instruments laid aside. In *Ecclesiastes* 9. 10. sayes *Solomon*, *whatever thine hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave, whither thou goest*: and your Time is not at your Dispose: Therefore when you Pray, Pray as if you should Pray no more; Hear, as if you should Hear no more; doe every Duty as if that were the last Duty you should ever do upon Earth.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, And in the Laſt place, If your Times be in the Hands of God, Wait his good Pleaſure, Wait Patienly upon him; Let Faith and Patience hold out to the end of your days, under all Providences wait the Iſſue from the Lord. In all your Lives Wait as Servants, Wait as Candidates, and as Heirs of the Promiſe, as *Job* reſolved to Wait, and *Jacob* profeſſed, in *Gen.* 49. 18. *I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord.*

Take

Take two or three Conſiderations more, and I have done for this Time.

Firſt, Conſider, Your Times which are in the Hands of God, are a Truſt, or Talent Committed to you, for no other end, but for the Glory of God, the Honour of Chriſt, and your own Salvation work: ſo much as is ſpent in any other Concerne, not conducing to theſe Great Ends, is ſadly miſpent, And every one of us muſt give an Account of our Time to God.

Secondly, Conſider, That upon every Moment depends Eternity: The νῦν, The preſent Now, being only Ours, and while we call it Ours, it is gone. O Eternity! Eternity! The Weight of a never ending Eternity, ſhould make us prize every Moment, and account them precious Opportunities. We ſhould ſay with Chriſt, *John 9. 10 I muſt work while the day laſts, the night comes wherein no man works.*

Thirdly and Laſtly, When Time is over, there is no recovery of one loſt Opportunity: No Sighs, no Groans, no ſad Complaints, no Weeping Eyes, no bleeding hearts can then prevail,

or Redeem One Minute. What would the Damned Souls in Hell (think you) give for a day, for an Hour? Thouſands of Worlds would they give if they had them, but 'tis too late. When the Angel in *Revelation* 10. 6. ſhall ſtand upon the Sea, and upon the Earth, and lift up his Hand to Heaven, and Swear by him that liveth for ever, That Time ſhall be no more: Then all the Time-waſters, that have Sinn'd away their Time, Wanton'd away their Seaſons, or Miſs-imployed their dayes, ſhall be fill'd with Horrour and Amazement. What a Dreadful Conſideration is this to them, who ſhall be found in that day in a Chriſtleſs, and a Graceleſs Condition, and their Work not Finiſhed: But Joy unſpeakable, to them that have Wiſely filled up their Dayes: They ſhall ſee Sorrow and Sighing fly away for ever, and hear the Spirit of Chriſt Proclaiming in *Revelations* 14. 14. *Bleſſed are the Dead which Dye in the Lord; That they may from henceforth reſt from their Labours, and their Works follow them.*

O! Then (SIRS) as you would Eſcape a Dreadful ETERNITY, as you would Poſſeſs a Glorious and a Bleſſed ETERNITY, Improve your Time for GOD, for your Own SOULS, Labour to Affect your ſelves with this Great TRUTH, *That your Time is in the Hands of God;*

God; and while it is lent a little longer to you, you may get Christ into your Hearts, that when your Dayes are Ended, you may Lodge in the Bosome, and Enjoy the Embraces, of your Dear Redeemer for Ever, and for Ever.

FINIS.

BOOKS Printed for Tho. Taylor, *at the* Hand *and* Bible *on* London-Bridge.

ARgalus and *Parthenia*, by *Francis Quarls.*

Hodders Decimal Arithmetick.

Heaven Taken by Storm, by *Tho. Watson.*

The Childs Delight, or an Essay to the *English* Grammer, by *Tho. Lye.*

A Manual for Parents, by *Tho. White.*

A Discourse of the Excellency of the Heavenly Substance, on *Heb.* 10. 34. by *J. Hicks.*

Two Sermons, One on the 5*th* of *November*, the other before the *Military Company* at St. *Clements Danes*, by *John Scot*, Minister of St. *Thomas Southwark.*

Of *Ejaculatory Prayer*, the Necessity there is of it, the Advantages there are for it, and the Advantages there are by it, Demonstrated